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Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps

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The Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps is the Air Force's largest and oldest commissioning program. Initially based on the Morrill Act of 1862 and the National Defense Act of 1916, the ROTC program underwent a major change with the ROTC Vitalization Act of 1964. This act, which eliminated compulsory ROTC at state land-grant colleges and universities, offered two- and four-year scholarships with a focus on academics and leadership. The Vitalization Act established the Junior ROTC program and paved the way for today's AFROTC program. AFROTC currently operates at 144 colleges and universities and has over 900 crosstown agreements with other institutions. As of 31 October 2001, cadet enrollment was 17,559 college students. AFROTC's scholarship program includes more than 7,904 cadets and a scholarship budget of \$50.6 million in fiscal year 2002.

Programs and Operations

AFROTC offers one- through four-year programs. The four-year program is divided into two phases: the General Military Course (GMC), which encompasses the freshman and sophomore years, and the Professional Officer Course (POC), which covers the junior and senior years. During the summer between their sophomore and junior years, GMC cadets attend a four-week field training camp in a controlled environment to assess their potential as officers. Cadets not enrolled in ROTC as freshmen or sophomores attend a five-week summer field training camp. This five-week camp allows extra time for these cadets to gain the leadership skills GMC cadets acquire in leadership laboratories (LLAB) during the first two years of ROTC. Students entering the two-year ROTC program also complete entry-level classroom work during this summer camp.

Recently, the one-year program was designed to meet AF production shortfalls. Students attend a seven-week AFROTC field-training encampment during the summer. After successfully completing all requirements, the cadet is commissioned as an Air Force officer.

AFROTC continues to institute initiatives to improve its program, retain students, and conserve resources. With the critical need to promote diversity in military and civilian aviation, AFROTC partnered with the Secretary of the Air Force's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Businesses to establish interest in and support for the Flight Awareness Summer Training (FAST) program to inspire and retain minority students. This program provides cadets at historically black colleges and universities and minority institutions the opportunity to receive aviation ground school instruction and primary flight instruction during their summer break.

A second initiative is the foreign language immersion program. This four-week program is designed for junior and senior cadets with at least three years of foreign language studies. Cadets travel to the foreign country, live with local families, study at local universities, receive total language and cultural immersion, and commit to speaking only the language of study for the entire training period.

To retain cadets and provide flight experience, ROTC and the CAP instituted the CAP flight orientation program. This program puts ROTC cadets in CAP aircraft on regularly scheduled sorties, allowing CAP to make better use of its flying hours and giving ROTC cadets an opportunity to fly. In fiscal year 2001, nearly 2,000 ROTC cadets participated in the program, logging a total of more than 3,200 sorties. Future plans call for a similar level of activity.

Curriculum

The main curriculum areas are leadership studies, field leadership, profession of arms, military studies, and communications skills. Teaching methods include informal lecture, guided discussion, case studies, readings, and practical exercises (athletics, group leadership problems, and the leadership reaction course).

Curriculum Summary

| Instructional Area | Academic Hours |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Leadership Studies | 64 |
| Communication Skills | 49 |
| Profession of Arms | 30 |
| Military Studies | 63 |
| Admin/Testing | 30 |
| LLAB | 240 |
| Field Training | 286 |
| TOTAL | 762 |

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